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A LETTER

TO

THE CABINET MINISTERS,

SUGGESTING A MODE TO RELIEVE

(IN PART)

The Distresses of the Empire,

AND TO MAKE ITS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BALANCE:

BEING A SUPPLEMENT

(By the same Author)

TO

“ England may be Extricated from her Difficulties,

Consistently with the Strictest Principles of

POLICY, HONOUR, AND JUSTICE.”

BY

EDWYN ANDREW BURNABY, ESQUIRE.

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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR

1880-81

IN RESPONSE TO A

RESOLUTION OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED MAY 10, 1879

AND A RESOLUTION OF THE

SENATE PASSED MAY 10, 1879

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A LETTER
TO
The Cabinet Ministers,
&c.

MY LORDS,

IN offering to the consideration of your Lordships a plan to alleviate, in part, the distresses of the people, and to provide an effectual fund to meet the current yearly expenses of this still most powerful and most enviable empire—while I lament, sincerely, the temporary privations which every class of his Majesty's subjects have for some time sustained, I feel the highest gratification in anticipating that the difficulties of this country have at length attained their height, and that brighter days, under a judicious system, may, speedily, be expected. And allow me, my Lords, to say that should the plans which I shall have the honor to propose contribute, as I confidently

believe they will, if adopted, to this end, I shall feel a satisfaction beyond all description. Happy indeed, should I now be, could I expect that so glorious a change could be effected, without some sacrifices on the part of my countrymen ; but while I know that to hold out such a hope would be the basest delusion, I feel a genuine British confidence in this bosom, which tells me that the great mass of my countrymen will continue to evince so patriotic an example of patient submission to the necessities of the times—and ought not I to say to the will of God—that at the same time as it will reflect the highest honour on themselves, it will tend also to make easy the now rugged path over which Ministers have to pass, and enable them with comparative facility to repair the road, and with such durable materials that the people themselves will hereafter, in their remaining journey through life, confess that by being patient they consulted their truest interests, and that there can be no difficulties too great for Englishmen, under the protection of Providence, to surmount.

As I do not wish unnecessarily to occupy too large a portion of your Lordship's time, I shall not enter into a diffuse discussion on the origin of the evil we all lament, further than to express my astonishment any should attempt to deny that such evils must necessarily in part result

from the change to a peace from a war demand ; for when it is recollected what large supplies of clothing and provisions were required for our troops and prisoners of war—what great quantities of iron, cordage, sails, &c. for our navy, which demands have now nearly ceased—I do say, my Lords, that he who can assert that the same briskness in these articles of trade can continue now as before, must be the veriest fool, or the most obstinate man in Europe. Prosperity in trade can only result from the demand for the article to be disposed of. If this increases, the prosperity of the trader increases also—if this diminishes, his prosperity must diminish too : and it is just as absurd to deny that a change to peace from war, which has necessarily lessened these demands has had an effect, as to deny that a linen-draper in Cheapside, whose existence depended upon his business, but whose customers had deserted him, had become a bankrupt in consequence thereof.

The change from peace to war has therefore had an effect, though this effect might probably have been materially lessened had a judicious policy in other respects, and particularly in our agricultural system, been adopted. But, my Lords, I can by no means allow that any degree of blame can attach to Ministers, because some errors have crept into our system, and I believe

the reasonable part, even of the sufferers themselves, entertain the same opinion. For men of candour and liberality can never censure Ministers, when they recollect the tumultuous opposition which was made to those measures of relief which Government, from a due sense of duty, had proposed to Parliament. It was infinitely better to give time to the people to see their own error, than to have involved the country in riot and disorder. The people now begin to discover that with a neglected agriculture they themselves must become paupers^a—that even with cheap provisions they may starve—and that it is much better for them to live where industry is requisite to procure food, than in a country where, though provisions are plentiful, the want of employment presents a bar to their obtaining them. And may we not hope, now that the people must be convinced of their error in opposing the good intentions of Government, they will for once allow it a little credit, and await the result, before they condemn the measures that may be proposed for their benefit untried.

This country, during a long and protracted war, attained to a height of prosperity, infinitely superior to what any ancient or modern

^a As was the case during the whole of last year, when corn was cheap.

state ever enjoyed. While provisions increased in price, the labourer and mechanic found less and less difficulty in procuring them. Improvements in banking, draining, and enclosing, gave constant employment to the poor. The farmer not only required more labourers, but he was even enabled to have his domestic men-servants. He rode a hunter where before a cart-mare carried him, thereby encouraging the breed of horses. A new saddle and bridle became requisite, and of consequence sadlers sprung up in our country towns where before whit-tawers scarcely existed.^b His wife and daughters, instead of wearing homespun aprons and gowns, dressed in British muslins, and Manchester felt the benefit of the change. In lieu of burning wood on hubs, an elegant new grate became requisite for coal, and Birmingham participated in the farmer's prosperity, in common with the china manufacturer who supplied his table, and the cabinet-maker and upholsterer who furnished his house. What signified it, then, to the mechanic and

^b It is a well-known fact, that retail shops of all descriptions have increased above five-fold within the last twenty-five years in our provincial towns. To what can this be attributed, but to agricultural prosperity. Landlords and farmers have been almost their exclusive customers. Since the depression of agriculture, these shops are deserted, and many of their occupiers have already been gazetted as bankrupts.

labourer how much either of them gave for his loaf, if by honest industry it could be procured. What signified it to them, what nominal value the current coin of the kingdom bore, or whether the circulating medium was gold or silver. This circulating medium, be it what it might, was the representative of their labour, and enabled them, more conveniently only, to get what that fairly entitled them to. It was the additional demand on the farmer to produce *by his labour* an extra quantity of food, to make up the deficiency arising from a foreign non-importation; which called their manufacturing labour into activity also to pay for it, and induced the mechanic to exert his ingenuity to the utmost to invent new articles of use, of elegance, and of luxury, to exchange by the aid of the circulating medium with the farmer for his produce. Without this mutual demand for an exchange of food and newly-invented luxuries, each party would have been starving under the existing circumstances of the country. For after all, those who fairly consider the subject, must be convinced that a general internal prosperity can arise only from a generally-diffused internal labour, or in other words from the facility of mutually obtaining necessities, comforts, and luxuries of life, by an interchange of labour.

A brisk internal demand for provisions must, therefore, necessarily act as a stimulus both to agricultural and mechanical labour. If the mechanic can procure his daily bread from abroad by making articles only for foreign consumption, he may flourish; but the farmer, the agricultural labourer, and the landlord, must pine. Should it, however, happen, that the mechanic, being unable to procure foreign corn, must exchange his oaken table for it with the English farmer, the former obtains his bread, and the latter becomes, in exchange for it, possessed of this article of utility. Suppose, however, there are so many oaken tables made, that they become so common and so cheap as not easily to be exchanged for food; a mahogany table is made, and the change is effected. By degrees the farmer produces so much corn, that he has more than sufficient to procure necessities only. He finds now comforts within his reach, and the carpet-manufacturer receives his order. Shortly his increasing produce enables him to aspire after luxuries, and half a dozen trades are employed to make him a handsome gig.

For let me ask on what account does the farmer till the soil? Not to hoard up his property, but to be enabled by it to enjoy life. It is for this reason that he not only labours himself, but he calls into activity all the labour

within his reach and his means. He produces to a great extent by his labour, and in proportion as what he produces is beyond his wants, he exchanges the extra produce of his labour for the produce of Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham, Leicester, Liverpool, and London. All are now mutually benefitted; but if instead of this, in consequence of the markets being glutted with foreign corn, he cannot exchange the produce of his labour at such a rate as to enable him to procure the produce of these places in return for it, or to compete with the foreign agriculturist, he will necessarily exchange his labour for idleness. And then comes the discovery that notwithstanding the foreigner should even exchange his own labour for the same proportion of labour from the above places, as the English farmer formerly did, still as there is a deficit in the general or aggregate internal labour, in consequence of the inactivity of the farmer and his labourers, the country is no longer in the same prosperous situation as before, and that a consequence of this grievous alteration is, that the farmer has become a bankrupt, and he and his labourers are now supported by poor rates. But the real truth is, that foreign labour is so cheap, and so large a proportion of corn can be produced from it, at a given price to what can

be procured from a similar ratio of labour in England, that it can be sent to this kingdom in exchange for an infinitely less proportional quantity of manufacturing labour than would be required from the mechanic to balance an equal produce from English agricultural labour; and that therefore as a much less proportion of articles will of necessity be manufactured to procure it, fewer hands in English manufactures will consequently be required. As this is rather a complicated position, I will state an example to make it clear.

Suppose, then, twenty English farmers were individually to require a gig, and that the cost of these to each in the country would be £40; now in order to pay for these, each farmer must produce and sell ten quarters of wheat at £4 per quarter. But suppose twenty foreigners were to step into the places of these English farmers, and having driven them out of the market, were to supply the country with the same quantity of corn at £2 per quarter. Now unless the foreigner in return can take the same quantity of gigs, the coach-maker must suffer, but this he cannot clearly do, unless the coach-maker reduces his price one half. At first sight there appears no difficulty in doing so, because the mechanic secures the same quantity of corn for the same number of gigs, as

usual; but at length it is unfortunately discovered that though provisions have fallen one half, £20 will not now go as far as £40 did before, and for this reason—because food alone is not requisite in these days. Exclusive of this, there is a large demand for taxes, and owing to the depreciation of the English farmer's produce, and the consequent ruin of himself and labourers for poor rates also, so that at length the coach-maker finds out that though he can procure his corn at half price, yet as he can get only half the price for his own labour, he is not, after paying all demands against him, so rich as formerly. But even this is not the whole view of the question, for the fact is, that the foreign farmer is so poor and so miserable—and he is besides so devoid not merely of all ideas of luxury, but also of every idea of comfort, that he has no demand for the gig, and therefore he cannot take sufficient British manufacturing labour in exchange for his own labour, but must be paid a large proportion in specie. Hence the English mechanic and manufacturer have, or ultimately will find that by an exchange of their corn for British labour, though through a circulating medium nominally or even really higher than with foreigners, such an interchange of British labour can procure to the exchangers more mutual benefits than

by a foreign exchange, and that the advantages arising from an internal trade, are infinitely greater than those which result from a foreign one.

This then, my Lords, is the true state of the question. It is not so much whether corn can be procured cheaper from abroad, as whether by restricting the supply of it to British soil more mutual comforts are not procured. The riches of a country can only result from labour and produce; and in proportion as you can employ the former upon the latter is a country opulent. Unless in our investigations into the origin of the present distress we keep this truism steadily in view, we can never understand where the root of the evil lies. If we permit an importation of foreign corn, except in extreme cases, we paralise British labour—we then substitute idleness for industry. In proportion as the foreigner can take our manufactures, those engaged in them may be prosperous; but as it would be impossible for foreign nations to have so large a demand on us as to employ all our labouring hands, those who continued idle (and a large proportion of the people must be so) would be a positive loss to the community. We may talk, indeed, about rents falling, and that the farmer will then be able to employ his accustomed number of la-

bourers. The idea is fallacious. If rents fell to nothing, the farmer could not compete with the foreigner—while the nobleman and country gentleman must reduce their establishments, or if they continued them, it must be at such an alteration in wages, education, purchases, &c. &c. that the labourer, the schoolmaster, and the shop-keeper will in the end be the greatest sufferers. But rents cannot fall and taxes be paid: if one falls the other must also, and then what will become of the fundholder. I fear he will not be found among the customers of the shop-keeper. But where, my Lords, is the necessity for all this, when by encouraging our own instead of foreign agriculture, every evil may be obviated.

Far be it, however, from my wish to depreciate foreign commerce. I value it highly, and would be the last to throw any unnecessary impediment in its way, but still truth compels me to say, it is only really useful when it takes off the superabundance of internal labour, for such produce of foreign labour as cannot be procured at home. If then, my Lords, this view of the question is accurate, and I believe it is, there can be no doubt as to the policy of effectually protecting our agriculture against foreign competition, and these truths cannot be too widely disseminated.

It is a fact too notorious to be denied, that peace has removed a large circulating medium from the market; and although it cannot be expected to restore this altogether, I shall nevertheless propose a measure for the consideration of your Lordships, which will very materially contribute to this end; and I have the happiness to know, that while it will very essentially assist the agricultural body, it will tend much to the prosperity of the trading interest also, and prove injurious to none. And, my Lords, allow me to say, that however naturally anxious I must be to rescue the agricultural body from those difficulties under which it so avowedly labours, I feel the sincerest happiness in being firmly convinced that in my attempts to do so, I am even in a greater degree contributing to the prosperity of the manufacturing interest also, for the prosperity of the trade of England is so intimately interwoven with that of the landed proprietors that the former cannot exist with a decayed agriculture.

It is allowed by all, that one of the causes of the agricultural distress is to be found in the impossibility to procure pecuniary aid, even on the best mortgage securities; and it is but too well known that, owing to this difficulty, estates in different parts of England have been

sold to answer the mortgage demands, at one half the sum they cost only a year or two before.*

To remedy this acknowledged inconvenience, my Lords, I propose that a bill should be brought into parliament to enable the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt to make advances, as the receipt of money appropriated to them enables them to do so, of a sum not exceeding twenty millions, by way of loan, in sums of not less than £1,000, nor exceeding £10,000, to the proprietors of landed estates. And as I should recommend that these sums should be allowed to remain, if required, fifteen or twenty years, the parties borrowing will find economy in paying $5\frac{1}{2}$ or perhaps even 6 per cent. which will be necessary to defray the extra expenses which Government must unavoidably incur by this measure. Some difficulty may be anticipated from fixing the preference to applicants, but this may easily be obviated, and as a preliminary to this, the aggregate sum to be lent should be divided among the different counties of England, in the relative proportions which those counties

* A farmer having saved £8,000, bought an estate for £20,000, £12,000 of the purchase money remaining on mortgage. Last year the money was called in, and being unable to procure it, the estate was again sold for £12,000, the mortgage was paid, and the farmer was ruined.

contributed respectively during the last year of war to the property tax from land only. This measure will necessarily suspend the operation of the sinking fund on the public stocks for a time, but it must contribute rather to strengthen than lessen their security, because the money advanced will be upon the real property of the kingdom, and the funded proprietors will, I am convinced, in the end obtain greater advantages than disadvantages from the proposed measure.

I anticipate an objection which will be started by would-be-reputed patriots, arising from the increased patronage the appointment of the extra commissioners requisite to carry this plan into effect, would give Government; and therefore I declare on my honor that while I *shall not* be a candidate for one farthing of the twenty millions, I will *gratuitously* and *most willingly* act as one of these commissioners for the county of Leicester, and I feel a pride in saying, that in executing an act so likely to benefit hundreds, I believe I could name twenty gentlemen in this county, of large property, independent conduct, upright and honourable minds, who would devote their time cheerfully to the same good work, without expectation of fee or reward; and I have no doubt other

counties would imitate our example.^d

It may, perhaps, be objected that this mode of relief must be fallacious, because it can only be effected by inducing persons to borrow money: to this then I answer, that no one borrows for amusement, but that many a man is ruined because he cannot borrow money at all; a small sum borrowed on an exigency will often avert ruin, and therefore I fondly anticipate that many a one who would otherwise be ruined, will be saved by the expedient recommended here.

Ask nine out of ten whom you meet, what is the cause of our present distress, and they will answer that it does not so much arise from an actually decreased demand, as from a want of money. Put twenty millions into circulation, and distress will soon disappear.

^d The best mode of carrying these loans into effect would be as under:—

There should be a general body of commissioners, with adequate salaries, in London, together with an appointment of counsel to examine the respective titles of the applicants. Each county should also have a set of commissioners appointed in the same manner as those under the property tax act; and to these, one or more solicitors should be attached. A person wanting to borrow money should, on application to these commissioners, have his title stated by their solicitors, and transmitted in the usual manner to some of these counsel in London, to be examined; and on its being approved of, the provincial commissioners should report to that effect to the commissioners in London, under whose direction the deeds should be drawn and the money paid.

It may, however, possibly be said that the measure is unnecessary, and that things will of themselves find their proper level without it. This is certainly in part true; things will in due time find their own level, but not till at least one half the country is first ruined.

In a natural state, things may be allowed to find their own level without danger, but this cannot be done in an artificial state of affairs. England has for many years been, and so long as her debt continues will be, in an artificial state. This artificial state originated chiefly at first from the immense issues of paper during a long war. Had it been possible to have withdrawn these issues gradually, and in proportion as her debt and taxes decreased, things would in the same ratio have found their own level almost imperceptibly, and without artificial aid. But in the present state of England this is impossible. By withdrawing the issues of paper money immediately on the peace, and permitting the unlimited importation of foreign corn, the prices of agricultural produce were nearly reduced to what they were twenty-five years ago. Now this present ruinous state of things cannot continue, and the interest of the debt contracted since that period be paid also. And yet this alarming state of things must most inevitably continue, and the nation will speedily

be on the verge, if not actually in a state of bankruptcy, without some extraneous, some artificial assistance, till such time at least as the returning prosperity of Europe, which will ultimately result from peace, shall have in some degree remedied the defect. The plan, therefore, which I recommend to your Lordships will give this artificial assistance, and in a manner injurious to none. Neither the state, nor any individual in it, will be at all the poorer for it.^e

But should it be objected that by withdrawing so large a sum as twenty millions from purchases into the funds, a depression will be felt by them, I reply that such depression can be but momentary. When Government were annually funding large sums during the war, the funds did not, after they had recovered from the first shock of the French revolution, materially fall, on a new loan being made, and it may possibly, and indeed in all probability will, happen, that from so large a sum as twenty millions being brought into the mortgage market nearly at once, it will so completely stock it,

^e Just as I was about to send these sheets to the press, I saw by the papers that a similar plan to the one here recommended was to be adopted by the Bank. I found, therefore, my plan in part had been anticipated. But the more money brought into the mortgage market the better, and therefore neither plan need interfere with the other. It is impossible for the bank issues alone to be adequate to the demand.

that it either will not all be wanted, or that private individuals will, of necessity, be obliged to purchase into the funds, from their inability to procure mortgage securities. At present persons are afraid to lend on mortgage, from not knowing to what land is to fall. This measure will recover and perhaps fix the price of land on a steady basis, and will save thousands from ruin, who under the faith and expectation of the continued prosperity of the country, have purchased land at a high price, and twenty millions being thus so *diffusedly* added to the circulating medium of the country, will act like ELECTRICITY in restoring confidence, and consequently prosperity. Agricultural failures will no longer take place, or rents be in arrear: the labourer will again have work, the mechanic employment, and the country shop-keeper custom. Nor need the manufacturer or the merchant fear that by thus keeping up the price of provisions to a fair price, the external trade will be injured. Government has it in its power, by prudently lessening the duties on exported manufactures, to remedy every inconvenience here, while there is scarcely any tax which the landed interest, provided it is fairly upheld, cannot pay in lieu of these duties.

There is another class of persons who experience considerable difficulty in these times,

and from which they are the least able to extricate themselves. Such are those who in consequence of being unable, from entailed estates, to borrow money on mortgage, are obliged to raise it by annuities. As beyond the fair interest, a further sum for life insurance is paid by them, on which a large duty is also charged, the most practicable way to relieve their difficulties, would be to exonerate them from the duty now paid to Government, and to give them a positive right, by law, to deduct such duty from the annuities with which they *now* stand charged. This will afford them great relief, and be injurious to none. And as all annuities are enrolled, and the value of every person's life at the time of granting the annuity can always, according to his then age, be ascertained, even should the party advancing the money not have insured it, but run the risk himself, the borrower's claim to deduction would easily and fairly be ascertained.

Accompanied, then, by these measures of pecuniary relief, and by a bill fairly, impartially, and properly digested, to protect agricultural produce, I beg leave to suggest to your Lordships the propriety of appealing to the landed interest, for their support and assistance to carry into effect a plan to meet the necessary expenses, by raising the supplies within the year.

And as one means of accomplishing this most desirable plan, I propose, with the fullest confidence in the true wisdom of the measure, a property tax on land, not exceeding 10 per cent. of which $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. should be paid by the landlord, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ by the tenant, and in all respects exactly on the principle of the old property tax, as to deductions, &c. And in order to quiet any alarm on this subject among that description of persons upon whom this tax will, in the first instance, be levied, I only request of them, before they clamour, fairly to consider the effect it will really have, and I am persuaded they will then be convinced that though the nominal, they will not ultimately be the actual payers of it. Let the people also for once be satisfied patiently to try the experiment, and I am certain they will soon find themselves richer and happier with these measures and taxes, than they now are without them. I can assure them this opinion springs from the conviction of a heart which feels for their distresses, and which is incessantly employed in devising schemes to relieve them.

Nothing can be so fallacious or so radically ruinous, as not to make our expenditure and income meet. To raise the supplies wanted by increasing our funding system, though perhaps it may not be so much felt at the first,

will in the end, and at no very distant date, be destructive to us, and paralise our future exertions. Whereas, my Lords, by a proper, not a parsimonious economy, and a little judicious management, this grand plan so necessary for the salvation of England, may be effected, and in a manner, if accompanied by prudential measures, so as not to be felt at all. I despise, my Lords, the idea of bending to difficulties—“*ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito*” is my motto; and Hercules and the Carter my favourite fable.

Great as the difficulties of this country confessedly are, they are still surmountable; and let Ministers act with prudence and firmness—let Parliament be guided by patriotism and independence, and the people by patience and confidence in their rulers, and all will yet end well.

Nor let the landed interest think a property tax of 10 per cent. on their estates too great a sacrifice. A little reflection will convince them that though in the first instance it falls upon the owner and occupier, it always ultimately operates on the consumer. It has, in fact, all the advantages, without the obnoxious disadvantages, of the excise; and therefore I can never believe that an intelligent landed man will object to a necessary land tax, particularly

if accompanied by protection to his produce, and the proposed pecuniary assistance. And I will predict, that should the measure receive the sanction of Parliament, two years will not have passed away before the landed interest will acknowledge that it has been beneficial instead of injurious to them.

Nothing, my Lords, is, under existing circumstances, more diabolical than to lower the interest of the funds, or to touch the sinking fund beyond that point which in a former publication^f I recommended; and misery would inevitably be the result of so base a measure. Suppose the funds were destroyed, would not the fact be that one half the people would be ruined to enrich the other half. To whom does a large proportion of the sums raised by taxes go? Not to the Government, as the people are led by the enemies of their country to believe, but to the fundholders; and are not the majority of the fundholders our own countrymen?

^f See—*England may be Extricated*, &c.—If we can make our expenditure and income balance, and allow the sinking fund to go on, in a very few years, should a fresh war break out, this country would be amply prepared for it, and by adding the income of the sinking fund then to such sums as could be raised by a just property tax, England would be able to raise a revenue which would enable her to contend against the efforts of the whole world. To endeavour to effect this is true wisdom and genuine loyalty; not to do so is folly and treason, not merely to posterity, but to a large proportion also of those who are now living.

Destroy this source of their income, and they become paupers, and then instead of ten men in opulent circumstances, there will be one rich man and nine paupers. Those taxes which are appropriated to pay the interest of the debt are the means of equalizing property. By this equalization, ten times the number of poor find employment to what would otherwise be the case. The funds are, in fact, a source of wealth, not of poverty, to the country: destroy them, and Englishmen will soon see whether those who are benefitted by a reduction of taxes will have equal demands for the manufactures of England, or be able to employ the same number of servants and labourers as now, when by means of the funds, property is more generally diffused.

The patriotic reformers begin well, indeed, when they commence their political career by recommending a positive robbery; and they of course cannot fail to obtain a very powerful support from that large and respectable body the fundholders of England, now that they have discovered that one of the first benefits proposed to be derived from a reform in Parliament is to reduce them to beggary. But this is not all—for the poor, the honest, the industrious poor of England, to whom their ancestors have bequeathed the poor laws as

their birth-right, are to be deprived of these too, as well as of that source of comfort and employment, which they derive from the funds, and in lieu of going when in distress to the magistrate, and demanding that fair and just relief which is never under our present *rotten parliamentary system* denied them, they are under the *renovated order of things* to crouch humbly at the feet of these reformers, and implore charity of the men whose first act has been to violate God's eighth commandment. But the mask is removed, the views of these reformers stand exposed, and they are beginning to be execrated and despised: for it is now discovered that reform is only the pretext to delude, but that pillage and murder are the real objects which actuate them. In making these remarks, my object is to benefit my countrymen. To the poor I hope I have always been a steady friend, and for their benefit I will never cease to endeavour to remove the delusion attempted to be practised on them. It has always been my maxim, that a poor man ought by his labour to earn a comfortable supply of good warm clothing, white bread, prime meat, and wholesome beer, for his family. For the poor I have more than a respect—I regard them as among the most valuable of my countrymen, as the pride and strength of

England. This regard for them will always induce me to guard them against the insidious attempts of those, who themselves lurking cowardly behind, make the poor their dupes, and hurl them forward to destruction. No one knows the poor labourer better than I do. As his employer, I have found him industrious, upright, and honest; and as a magistrate, he has ever appeared to me reasonable in his expectations of relief, when by distress obliged to apply for it. I have found him grateful also for favors, regular in his family, kind to his parents, tender to his children, respectful to his superiors, and loyal to his king. He may, indeed, though I have never witnessed it myself, be subject for a moment to delusion, (for who among us is not subject to occasional aberrations from duty) and be drawn away by the specious arguments of the factious political demagogue, but this person's power over him is for the moment only; soon as he discovers his error, and such is his innate good sense that he very shortly does so, he abandons and despises his seducer, and never again relapses from the path of rectitude, for his conscience has had an indelible lesson imprinted on it. Such, my Lords, is the labourer of England—and such may he long continue to be.

To return, however, to the chief object of

this intrusion upon your Lordships, which from a full conviction that nothing else can save the empire, is to urge the necessity of raising the supplies within the year, and to suggest what appears to me the best and most practicable means of doing so. I beg leave further to suggest the propriety of laying a tax, not to exceed 5 per cent. on the funds, or one half of the proportion laid upon the land. To this impost the fundholder cannot, I flatter myself, with any propriety object; especially if he considers how infinitely counterbalanced this tax will be by the additional security the funds will obtain by making our expenditure and income balance. As far as relates to trade, I am decidedly of my former opinion that all idea of taxing it ought to be abandoned, because the inconveniences so greatly preponderate over any advantages to be derived from doing so. To trade every possible encouragement ought to be given; and besides it pays so largely to the state by export and import duties, that we ought to be amply satisfied with what it now contributes; and I verily believe that by not taxing it directly, our revenue will rather be encreased than diminished.

Thus then, my Lords, I have developed my plan, and I flatter myself a fairer one cannot be devised. The land is recommended to be

taxed 10 per cent. which considering the large parochial assessments it bears, will fairly entitle it to demand 5 per cent. from the funded property of the empire; while nothing additional is directly laid upon trade, because it indirectly contributes so much to the finances of the empire; and I propose a loan to the landed interest from the public money, which as I hope I have proved will be the means of gradually diffusing fresh life and vigour into the whole body politic. Nothing then remains but for Parliament to carry the plan into effect,⁵ and now is the time, my Lords, for the independent gentlemen of England to act. The standard of their country is unfurled—let them rally around it—let all paltry party distinctions be done away—let the real whigs remember the examples of a Burke and a Windham, and imitate these illustrious patriots—let them not be led away by clamour, but let reason be their

⁵ I am very anxious to see the Regent's speech on the opening of Parliament, which, I am persuaded, if judiciously worded and with a view to *practicable economy* only, is capable of creating so general a feeling of loyalty and public spirit, as will enable Government to raise, even within the year, the supplies requisite to keep up whatever force may be wanted to support the dignity of the Empire, and the peace of Europe. A very little management indeed will put down treason and sedition, and induce the people to exclaim from one part of the country to the other, from a firm and well founded conviction, that their interests are inseparably united—"the Prince and old England for ever."

guide. While they enforce every practicable economy, let them not permit economy to degenerate into meanness, or sanction any unnecessary diminution of that commanding force so essential to our retaining the proud and pre-eminent situation we now hold among the nations of the earth, and which is so necessary besides to secure the repose of Europe. And, my Lords, allow me to hope—allow me confidently to expect—that the Regent's Ministers, conscious of the integrity of their conduct, will fearlessly and undauntedly do their duty, never forgetting, if owing to the base arts of the degenerate, they should subject themselves to popular odium that “*magna est veritas et prævalebit*”—and that the delusion under which the people suffer will last but for the moment, while ere long this self-same people will hail them as their deliverers. Let Ministers, I say, reflect that while these would-be-reputed patriots will speedily sink into oblivion, they will themselves have gained unfading laurels, and that their names will hereafter be recorded on the historic page among England's worthies—among the greatest and most illustrious of her statesmen.

And, my Lords, permit me further to say, that looking around me, and observing the civil and religious liberty which this country exclusively enjoys ; seeing also the advances almost

daily made in developing the mysteries of the Christian religion, and witnessing besides the fruits of that religion in innumerable acts of public and private beneficence—I do most verily believe, nay I feel an unbounded confidence, that England is under the peculiar protection of Providence, and that she is, and will continue to be, the agent by whose means God will ultimately accomplish what all must be persuaded is His object—THE UNIVERSAL HAPPINESS OF MANKIND.

England then must flourish, notwithstanding the present unfavourable appearances.

I have the honor to be,
 With the highest consideration and respect,
 My Lords,
 Your Lordships' most obedient and
 very humble servant,
 EDWYN ANDREW BURNABY.

Leicestershire, Jan. 1, 1817.

Postscript.

THESE pages are published for the use of those who, unbiassed by party, can, by reflecting on what they read, draw just conclusions. To those whose minds are warped by party prejudice, they will I fear be perfectly unavailing. Still, however, I cannot resist the opportunity afforded me, earnestly to recommend to these persons to enquire, before they allow their passions finally to triumph over them, whether they have so fairly and impartially considered circumstances, as to be certain that should their inflammatory language lead their ignorant fellow-creatures to riot and disorder, their consciences may not be hoarding up for themselves future pangs of remorse, and whether *it is not possible* that when the curtain is about to drop upon the last scene of this life, they may not expect the judgment on the drama with all the agonizing feelings of despair. For whatever some persons may think to the contrary, I, for one, have never

doubted, and I have heard it inculcated by men of acknowledged learning and religion, for whom even these individuals would, with all their new political lights, have felt both awe and veneration, that those who either by their actions, words, or writings, instigate others to commit crimes, are themselves guilty of such crimes upon every principle of justice universally recognised by the wise in all ages; and that though in some cases they may not be accountable to an earthly tribunal, they are most indisputably amenable to the bar of Heaven. With the most anxious solicitude, therefore, for the welfare of all, I recommend to those who have knowledge, to make a proper use of it; and I hope those who have it not, will at least allow that there is nothing inimical to liberty in requesting them with the most friendly feelings, to be cautious in following the advice of others, should their own consciences suggest merely a doubt, which before the commission of a bad action they generally do, of the propriety of such advice. The Government of England is too powerful to be shaken. The people infuriated by wicked and designing men may riot, but the arm of justice will speedily arrest their progress; and while the higher instigators to such excesses will, like cowards and traitors to those whom they have deluded,

have taken especial care to be within the law, the people will be at once their dupes and the victims to it. To suspect and shun these men—to respect the laws, and to remember that honesty is the best policy, then, is the advice of the people's friend; and the time will come when those who do not follow it, will wish that they had.

E. A. BURNABY.

FINIS.

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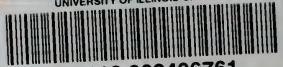
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